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BEFORE  
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF  
SOUTH CAROLINA  
DOCKET NO. 90-602-E - ORDER NO. 90-1179  
DECEMBER 19, 1990

IN RE: Application of Carolina Power & Light     )  
Company for Revisions to Service             ) ORDER  
Regulations Affecting Ownership and         )  
Maintenance of Socket-Type Meter Bases     )

On September 5, 1990, Carolina Power & Light Co. (CP&L) filed with the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (the Commission) a revision to its service regulations requiring customers needing single and three phase self-contained meter bases on and after January 1, 1991, to purchase, own and maintain these meter bases in addition to their present responsibility for installation.

The revision contained in the first paragraph of Provision 11(b) would require customers installing new socket-type meter bases on and after January 1, 1991, to be responsible for the purchase, ownership and maintenance of those meter bases in addition to their present responsibility for installation. In no other way are the service regulations being changed. Socket-type meter bases include single and three phase self-contained meter bases as used on the majority of houses and small nonresidential customers and self-contained "gang" meter bases of the type used on multi-family apartment buildings where multiple meters are

installed at one service location. CP&L presently provides approximately 4,000 of these meter bases per year in South Carolina.

The Company will continue providing socket-type meter bases at no cost through December 31, 1990 and will continue to own and maintain each of these meter bases after that date until such time as they require replacement. Since no transfer of ownership is involved, the existing level of investment for meter bases reflected in CP&L's rate base would not be affected. The effect on individual customers will be minimal since the majority of these meter bases are installed on new construction and would be considered part of the construction cost of the house or building. Future operating expenses related to the purchase and distribution of meter bases in South Carolina would, however, be reduced approximately \$133,000 per year, which will have a beneficial effect on future rates. CP&L asserts that customer ownership of meter bases is an accepted practice in many areas of the country served by both public power suppliers and investor owned utilities. CP&L is requesting approval at this time in order to provide sufficient time to notify electrical contractors, meter base manufacturers, electrical inspection agencies and independent suppliers to ensure that adequate supplies of acceptable meter bases are available by January 1, 1990.

On November 1, 1990, CP&L filed with the Commission a letter stating that pursuant to the Commission's letter dated September 25, 1990, the Company has published notice of this revision but the


Company's request has not yet been approved. CP&L is now proposing to further revise its service regulations to clarify the customer-owned meter base provision already under consideration by the Commission. This clarification, which is contained in the first paragraph of provision 11(b) was needed to alleviate concerns brought to light since CP&L's filing of this program with the Commission, and to strengthen the Company's authority to install and maintain the same types of conductors and facilities in the same manner as it presently does. Specifically, the added language clarifies that when Company-owned conductors are installed inside meter bases, Company employees may continue to install and terminate Company-owned conductors and facilities in customer-owned meter bases without electrical contractors' licenses or permits, and that Company-owned facilities installed inside customer-owned meter bases will continue to be under the exclusive control of CP&L, and thus will not be subject to electrical inspection.

The Commission finds that, for good cause shown, CP&L's original and additional requests for approval of revisions of CP&L's service regulations should be granted. CP&L shall file fifteen (15) copies of the revised service regulations as herein approved within fifteen (15) days of this Order date.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

  
Chairman

ATTEST:

  
Deputy Executive Director  
(SEAL)